DOCUMENT RESUME

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ABSTRACT

Operating on the principle of meeting community needs and the desire to build a realistic practicum experience for special education majors, Northeastern State College began a special camping program for mentally retarded children. The program provides the special education student with the opportunity of direct experience in working with the mentally retarded child, the community, and the child's parents. The students have the responsibility of helping to plan the program each year. A written evaluation is submitted by each adult participant, providing continuous evaluation of the program. Financial support in money and equipment comes from the community. The camp's activities include swimming, arts and crafts, speech therapy, dancing, boating, softball, fishing, and self-help activities. (Author/JA)

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ED 085382

Name of Program Submitted: Northeastern State College Camping Program for the Mentally Retarded

Institution: Northeastern State College

President: Robert E. Collier

Campus Public Information Officer: Kenneth Collins

Faculty Member Responsible for Program: William J. Ward

Title of the Faculty Member: Associate Professor, Special Education

Signature: R E Collier

Title: President of the College Date: October 3, 1973

Operating on the principle of meeting community needs and the desire to build a realistic practicum experience for Special Education majors, Northeastern State College began a special camping program for mentally retarded children.

The program provides a service to the mentally retarded children in the community and expands the teacher education program in Special Education. Teacher education students have an opportunity to help plan the program each year. They also have a chance to meet and work with parents of mentally retarded children, professionals who participate in the program, and a number of mentally retarded children.

The program has had such an impact on the participants that they often return as volunteer workers.

Reports from graduates in the field who have participated in the camping program indicate that this has been one of their better educational experiences.

SP 007 564

NORTHEASTERN STATE COLLEGE
Tahlequah, Oklahoma

The slides are numbered and described accordingly:

1. Camp movement involving campers and counselors
2. Dr. Major McClure, Division of Education and Psychology Chairman, visiting with some of the campers
3. Dr. Robert Collier, President of N.S.C. visiting with a camp counselor
4. Teddy, voted our best camper
5. Dr. Robert Collier visiting with one of the mentally retarded campers
6. Dr. Robert Collier visiting with one of the campers and a counselor from Northeastern State College
7. Dr. Elwin Fite, Dean of the College, and Dr. William Riddle, Director of Special Education visiting with Teddy a deaf trainable retarded camper
8. Dean Fite engaged in a volleyball game
9. Dr. Collier visiting with campers
10. Dr. McClure discussing the week with a camper and her counselor
11. A little song fest with some mentally retarded children
12. Some campers with the catch of the day
13. A game of tether ball
14. A camp counselor and her group
15. A cabin of campers and their counselors
16. Waiting for a boat ride
17. Getting ready to get aboard
18. Away they go
19. Returning from the ride
20. Dr. Collier saying goodbye

The photographs, slides, video tape, and super eight color film help illustrate some of the campers' experiences during the last two years. The above also gives a vivid example of why we feel the camp program has contributed to the teacher training program of the 150 Special Education majors who have participated.

PART I

Northeastern State College is located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. The college has long been interested in Special Education with its teacher training and community service programs. This was evidenced with the establishment of the Speech & Hearing Clinic in 1954, the Clinical Reading Program in 1958, the Mental Retardation Program in 1967, and the Learning Disabilities Program in 1972.

The special education program provides teacher training and community service under college sponsorship.

The program in Mental Retardation has followed this pattern by offering to the students at Northeastern State College a realistic experience in dealing with mentally retarded children.

The college hopes to achieve its objective through:

1. Placement of future teachers in mental retardation in a residential camping program for the mentally retarded during the summer term.
2. Providing camping experience for the mentally retarded in the community.

The specific purpose of the program is to create learning experiences for future teachers in the field of mental retardation and provide a community service.

PART II: DESCRIPTION & DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROGRAM

The mentally retarded constitute 3% of the general population and this percentage tends to increase in low income areas such as Cherokee County where Northeastern State College is located. Many of the mentally retarded children, because of their isolation in Northeastern Oklahoma, are deprived of an opportunity to participate in programs that are available elsewhere in the state. The lack of programming for the mentally retarded very definitely created a lack of opportunity for N.S.C. students majoring in mental retardation to receive a realistic

experience in working with the mentally retarded.

In the spring of 1970 the Administration, the N.S.C. students and the parents of the mentally retarded initiated a summer camping program for the mentally retarded. Northeastern State College students in Mental Retardation volunteered as camp counselors.

The parents and N.S.C. students and faculty supported the program for the 18 mentally retarded children who were enrolled.

The program was a success, and more than met the objective of service to teacher training in the area of Mental Retardation. A new course in camping with M. R. students was offered in 1971.

The camping program for the mentally retarded has grown from 18 participants in 1970, to 78 in 1973.

Program and Objectives

The program is concerned with the enrichment of teachers' training and providing education for the mentally retarded through camping. The program's objectives relate to:

1. The Mentally Retarded Child
2. Teachers for the Mentally Retarded Child
3. The Parents
4. The community

The camping environment has produced a different atmosphere in which many learning experiences can be reinforced in a leisurely setting.

Some specific objectives of the program for the mentally retarded children include the following:

1. Self care which includes dressing & bedmaking, learning some basic cooking skills, etc.
2. Social adjustment; learning to accept responsibility, working in a group, etc.
3. Communication skills, such as making needs known, responding to direction, etc.
4. Physical activities; participation in team activities such as: learning rules to help them as spectators, independent activities, swimming, and fishing.

5. New experiences for the mentally retarded child being away from home such as: boating, hiking, and meeting new people.

The Teacher of the Mentally Retarded

The program is designed to provide a realistic training experience for teachers of the mentally retarded. The objectives of the program include:

1. To give the future teacher first hand experience in planning the total camping program. This is accomplished by meeting in groups prior to camp to plan the following:
   a. Activities
   b. Schedule
   c. Cost (budget)
   d. Fund Raising
   e. Medical Aspects (medication, safety, etc.)
   f. Facility Selection

2. To expose the future teacher to the two main classifications of mentally retarded children, i. e. trainable & educable.

The Parent

The program offers an opportunity for parents of retarded children to better understand the potential of their child by watching him grow during his camping experience. Parents are invited to such activities as: softball, talent shows, art exhibits and helping the child load his camping gear.

The camp also provides a much needed rest for the parents.

The Community

The program provides a point of pride in the community. With the services of such a program available parents with special children look at Tahlequah as a place to live.

Since the program is directed toward local children, community support is assured.

Personnel

Personnel involved in this program include: Dr. W. T. Riddle, Director of Special Education; Dr. W. J. Ward, Camp Coordinator; Mr. Ron Jones, Camp

Coordinator; Mr. Jim Reese, Placement Director; Mrs. T. Jones, Nurse & Director of Safety; Dr. John Morgan, Medical Assistant; Cooks; and 40 N.S.C. students majoring in Special Education.

Budget

The budget for the program is approximately $2,250.00 per year. Northeastern State College students paid $15.00 each to cover their food and insurance. Mentally retarded students have sponsors who pay $15.00 for each child enrolled. These two types of fees constituted $1,525.00 of the $2,250.00. The remainder was contributed by the Parent's Association for Retarded Children, the Student Council for Exceptional Children and various other community groups. The medical doctor, nurse, psychologist and Dr. Riddle volunteered their services.

Contribution to the Improvement of Teacher Education

The camp has given future teachers in Mental Retardation at N.S.C. a realistic experience with the mentally retarded which will be invaluable to their classroom teaching. It has provided a dimension in community relations that really could not be duplicated in a college classroom setting. Of equal importance is the help the program has given the future teacher in dealing with the parents of the mentally retarded.

By participating in a cooperative effort in planning the camp, the future teacher has some understanding of the organization and operation of a camping program.

Evaluation

A written evaluation is submitted by each adult participant in the camping program. This provides a continuous evaluation of the camping program.

During the camping program, visitations are made by: the Dean of the College, the President of the College, the Chairman of the Division of Education and

Psychology, and the Director of Special Education.

All evaluations which have been made to the present time are positive.